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ABSTRACT

In designing a social studies curriculum, teachers and administrators need to consider issues of scope and sequence. Scope refers to the ways in which the content of various units taught in the social studies curriculum are fashioned. Sequence refers to the order in which these units are taught. An examination of the following guidelines is suggested to determine the scope of social studies units: a focus on each of the six major social science disciplines (geography, history, political science, economics, anthropology, and sociology) major activities of human beings; and the interests and needs of students. There are a number of approaches teachers and administrators may take when deciding the sequence in which social studies units are taught. These approaches include the expanding environment of the student; decisions made soley by teachers, principals, and supervisors; teacher-pupil planning; current affairs; and the "schools without walls" concept, which involves immersing students in the community beyond the school. (DB)

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SCOPE AND SEQUENCE IN THE CURRIUCLUM

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SCOPE AND SEQUENCE IN THE CURRICULUM

Teachers, supervisors, and principals must consider carefully problems of scope and sequence in the social studies. Scope pertains to breadth of content taught in various units of study in the social studies. Sequence pertains to when a unit is taught.

Scope in the Social Studies

What should be the breadth of content comprising the social studies curriculum? It is generally agreed that the social studies curriculum should consist of the following six social science disciplines as a minimum:

1. geography---a study of the natural environment of human beings such as rivers, lakes, oceans, diverse land forms, and climatic factors as they affect human beings.
2. history---a study of the past as it relates to relevant, selected events and issues pertaining to human beings.
3. political science---a study of man's involvement in government and political activities on the local, state, national, and international levels.
4. economics---a study of goods and services produced in a society and how these are utilized in a given state, country, or area.
5. anthropology---among other branches a study of culture and its effects upon human beings. Culture, among other things, pertains to values, beliefs, customs, and ways of living of a specific set of human beings.
6. sociology----a study of the norms, values, and goals of a specific group of people and how sanctions are applied to attain these norms. Sociologists, among other areas, study urban living, rural living,

overpopulation, crime, delinquency, the family, and race relations.

Various units of study then can be developed from these social science disciplines which may provide content for the social studies curriculum.

The scope of social studies may also be perceived as consisting of the following activities of human beings:

1. fulfilling recreational needs of humans.
2. providing needed goods and services.
3. meeting religious and spiritual needs of individuals.
4. establishing rules and regulations in government-local state, national and international levels.
5. fulfilling educational needs of human beings.
6. transporting people, materials, and objects.
7. communicating with others in face to face situations as well as in using technology.
8. providing for health needs of individuals.
9. receiving recognition, status, and security in life.
10. respecting institutions in society such as the home and family.
11. determining a suitable vocation in life.

These endeavors or activities of human beings may provide titles for, as well as content in, diverse units of study in the social studies. For example, in human endeavor number one stated above entitled "fulfilling recreational needs of humans," the teacher may select a unit on "Hobbies in Our Lives" as being relevant for pupils in teaching-learning situations. The teacher may at selected intervals in a given school year discuss with learners recreational interests which they have such as collecting stamps, coins, or rocks; playing baseball, basketball, and football; and reading library books.

The scope of the social studies curriculum may also relate to the interests and needs of pupils. These intersts and needs may be determined in the following ways:

1. discussing with pupils which units of study they would wish to pursue.
2. having pupils assist in determining which problem areas to pursue within a unit of study.
3. listening to comments made by pupils as to what captures their interests; objectives, learning experiences, and evaluation procedures may be selected and evaluated based on student comments.
4. learning centers may be developed cooperatively by pupils with teacher leadership. The learning activities contained at each center would then largely determine what pupils are to learn.

The scope of elementary school social studies may also be determined in the following ways:

1. Writers of elementary social studies texts determine the scope of the social studies curriculum. Within each unit of study, these writers of social studies textbooks would stress selected facts, concepts, and generalizations that pupils are to achieve. Additional learning experiences selected by the teacher in ongoing units of study would guide pupils in developing understandings in greater depth.

2. Programmers could also aid in determining the scope of the elementary social studies curriculum. Thus, the content contained in programmed learning would stress selected ideas that pupils need to achieve. The programmer advocates content which learners are to acquire. The programmer then determines what pupils are to learn. The order or sequence of these learnings would also be decided upon by the writers of programmed materials.

Sequence in the Social Studies

After determining scope in the social studies, teachers must decide upon sequence of units. Sequence in units of study should be based upon the following criteria:

1. Units of study should be on the interest levels of learners.
2. Pupils should perceive purpose in ongoing units of study.
3. Individual differences must be provided for in ongoing units of study.
4. Pupils must have developed adequate readiness to participate in the new social studies unit.
5. Learners must be able to attach meaning pertaining to what is being studied.

The expanding environment is one approach utilized in determining sequence in units of study. In the expanding environment approach in determining sequence in units of study, pupils study what is near to them in the early primary grade levels and gradually develop understandings pertaining to what is further removed from them in their environment. The following units of study stress what is close to the child on the kindergarten level and gradually the child's environment expands to units of study which may eventually be quite far removed from the local community of the child:

Kindergarten and grade one. Units on the home, school, pets, and holidays.

Grade two. Units on the local community, city, and neighborhood shopping center.

Grades three and four. Units on the local state, and areas in the United States such as the southern states or the midwestern states.

Grade five. Units on Canada, Mexico, and American History.

Grade six. Units on Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Japan, China. India, Antarctic, the Middle East, South America, and Africa.

Thus, in determining sequence of social studies units, the expanding environment approach may be utilized. Pupils then study units pertaining to what is nearby on the early primary grade levels. Gradually, as pupils progress through the elementary school years, units are taught which pertain to content farther removed from the learner in terms of distance.

A second approach in determining sequence pertains to teacher, principals,

and supervisors selecting which units and in what order these units should be taught on each of the grade levels in the elementary school. The following sequence of units, as an example, may then be selected based on carefully thought through standards:

Kindergarten: Living in the Home, Our School, Our Pets, Animals on the Farm, Careers in our Community, Weather and How It Affects Us, and units on selected holidays.

Grade One: Careers in Our Neighborhood, The Neighborhood Shopping Center, Pollution and How It Affects Us, Homes Around the World, Living in Our City, and Living Safely in Our Environment.

Grade Two: Cities Around the World, Buying Goods and Services, Culture and the Community, City Government, History of Our Community, and Maintaining a Clean and Safe Environment.

Grade Three: Important Careers in Our State and Nation, Minority Groups in the United States and Their Contributions, Living in Our State, Inflation-Recession and How They Affect Us, and Manufacturing Areas of the United States.

Grade Four: Visiting Industiral Areas of the United States, Careers of the Future, Farming Around the World, Shopping Wisely, Culture and Human Beings, and Getting Along Well with Others.

Grade Five: Visiting Mexico and Its Southern Neighbors, Canada-Our Neighbor to the North, The Age of Discovery and Colonization, A New Nation Begins, Division Between States, and Developing a Modern Nation.

Grade Six: Visiting Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia; The Common Market Countries; India and Pakistan; The Middle East; Brazil and Its Neighbors; The Soviet Union; and China.

A third approach in determining sequence in social studies units pertains to pupils being heavily involved in determining titles as well as order of units taught. Thus, intermediate grade pupils with teacher guidance may agree to pursue the following units of study:

1. Making Friends
2. Getting Along with Parents
3. How to Earn and Use Spending Money
4. Writing Letters to Friends
5. Important Jobs in the Community
6. Learning More About Minority Groups
7. Ways of Preventing Wars
8. The Middle East, Northern Ireland, and Southeast Asia
9. The United States and the Soviet Union
10. Political and Economic Systems in the World

When pupils are involved in determining units of study and their sequence, the following criteria may be followed:

1. The interest of learners are of utmost importance.
2. Learners must perceive purpose in ongoing units of study.
3. Pupils must have adequate background information to pursue new units of study.
4. Proposed units of study must be relevant for learners.
5. It is possible to make provisions for each learner within the framework of the agreed upon units of study.
6. Pupils must perceive learnings as being sequential within, between, and among the diverse units of study.

A fourth way of selecting social studies units sequentially would pertain to selecting that which is important in current happenings on the face of the earth. Thus, units such as the following may be taught depending upon their relevancy in the current affairs:

1. Crisis in the Middle East
2. East versus West in World Affairs
3. Conflict in Southeast Asia
4. Changing Governments on the Face of the Earth
5. Struggle for Independence in Africa
6. Common Market Countries of Europe

Selecting units of study based on current affairs items should follow these criteria:

1. The current affairs items should be perceived by learners as being relevant.

2. Pupils should possess ample readiness to study units involving current affairs.

3. A variety of learning experiences within these units should provide for each learner in the class setting.

4. A rich learning environment must be in evidence within these units of study to capture pupil interest and purpose.

Content has been written about the schools without walls concept pertaining to teaching and learning. In emphasizing schools without walls, the community becomes very important in providing learning activities for pupils. Through teacher-pupil planning in the class setting, decisions are made as to which learning activities students may participate in. Thus, in studying the judicial system in the United States, pupils may visit and see in operation an actual courtroom situation. Following the excursion, pupils with teacher guidance may discuss their observations. This may involve using a variety of reference sources in the class setting to get needed information to answer questions and solve problems. An attorney may be invited to the class setting to answer and discuss questions identified by learners. Further excursion could involve visitingdifferent kinds or types of courts in a life-like setting. Observations made need to be discussed and evaluated. Additional data needed to solve problems and answer questions may come from several sources such as library and trade books, encyclopedias, films and filmstrips, slides and pictures, objects and models, resource personnel, panel presentations, debates, and interviews.

Values inherent in utilizing the school without walls concept in teaching and learning may well be the following:

1. Experiences for pupils are real and life-like.

2. Learners with teacher guidance determine sequence of what is to be studied and learned.

3. Pupils are actively involved in learning in problem-solving situations.

4. The concerns of pupils are important in determining sequential learnings.

5. Pupils' interest may serve as a valid criterion in determining what is to be learned and the order of these learnings.

In Summary

There are selected ways which teachers may utilize in determining scope of social studies units in the elementary school. Among others, the following approaches may be used:

1. An adequate emphasis should be placed upon each major social science discipline becoming a relevant part of ongoing units of study in the social studies.

2. Major activities of human beings in society may also provide the framework for determining the scope of units of study in the social studies.

3. The interests and needs of learners should be thoroughly considered when deciding upon the scope of the social studies curriculum.

Sequence in social studies pertains to when selected units of study are taught in the elementary school.

1. The expanding environment of the learner may assist in determining sequence in social studies units.

2. Teacher, principals, and supervisors may decide which units of study to teach in a sequential order.

3. Through teacher-pupil planning, sequence in social studies units may be determined. Thus, learners can be heavily involved in deciding upon sequential units of study.

4. Relevant current affairs items can provide a framework for determining sequence in ongoing units of study.

5. Schools without walls concept in teaching-learning situations would involve pupils' interests and purposes greatly when thinking about sequential units in the social studies.

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